I would like to write in support of CT bill SB 425, AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL TRANSPARENCY, EFFICIENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY.

Web tools like SeeClickFix allow cities to improve the quality and accessibility of citizen services that would not be possible otherwise. This is for three primary reasons:

1. Distributed citizen communication allows cities to connect citizens directly to city officials, removing a layer of cost. This has allowed hundreds of cities throughout the country — from Detroit and Albany to St Petersburg and Princeton NJ — to engage many more citizens that would have been possible previously. Many of these are small towns of less than 20,000 citizens. These towns —like those in CT—are not able to dedicate the resources to staff a call center. SeeClickFix gives citizens the same level of services as much larger cities without the cost.

2. Mobile applications engage a citizen base that is often underrepresented in local government. Low income and younger groups are often less connected to city services — given the required time and cost of traditional communication. By dramatically reducing the difficultly and cost of communication, apps like SeeClickFix engage groups of citizens that would otherwise be disconnected.

3. Open and public discussion around neighborhood issues has an inclusive effect on discussion that is not possible in the typical, closed system of service resolution. A small issue like a pothole or light outage can have an amazing effect on connect neighbors. This connection becomes discussion, connecting communities in ways that are incredibly empowering.

Thank you for reviewing this great bill.

Best, Tucker Severson